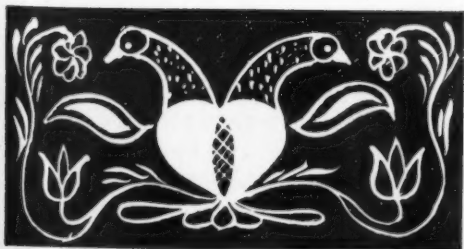
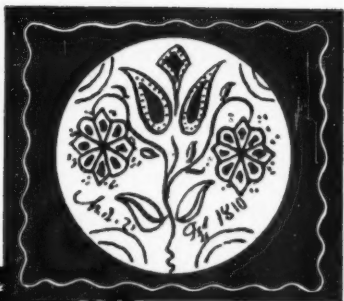


Ceramics MONTHLY

April 1956 • 50c



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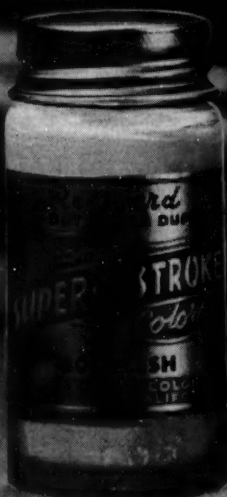
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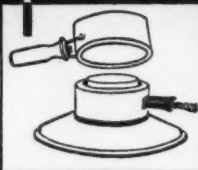
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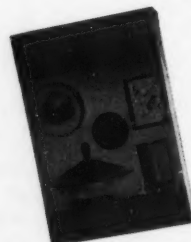
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Ceramics MONTHLY

Volume 4, Number 4

APRIL • 1956

50 cents per copy

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Cover by Robert L. Creager

Ceramics Monthly is published each month at the Lawhead Press, Inc., Athens, Ohio, by Professional Publications, Inc., S. L. Davis, Pres. and Treas.; L. G. Farber, V. Pres.; P. S. Emery, Secy.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE in U.S.A. and Possessions: one year, \$4; two years, \$7; three years, \$9. Canada and Pan Am. add 50 cents a year; foreign, add \$1 a year. Current issues, 60c; back issues, 60c.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE (advertising, subscriptions, editorial) should be sent to the editorial offices at 4175 N. High St., Columbus 14, Ohio. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Athens, Ohio, as granted under Authority of the Act of March 3, 1879.

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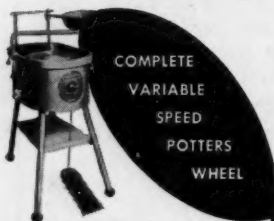
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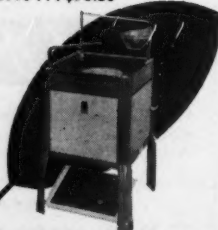
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Letters

RE: RAISED SLIP

Gentlemen:

Thank you for the interesting articles on raised slip decoration [Jan., March] by Pearl Fitzpatrick. Having seen work done in *pate-sur-pate* at the Victoria and Albert Museum and at the Smithsonian, I agree that it is outstanding in beauty.

It may interest you to know that a pair of M. Solon's vases recently sold for \$1000.

E. L. WALKER
New Brunswick, N. J.

WHERE IS IT!

Gentlemen:

I agree with the many letters you have printed on the basic value of your magazine as a help to the people who would like to make *good* potters and ceramists. I have nothing against people making jewelry out of bent cones—but where was the article by Tom Sellers [February]? [You said] it was going to be a "never-ending series." In January all that appeared was "Throwing Tips"; in February, nothing . . .

I am sure the subject of throwing is far from exhausted . . . Don't fade out, please. You have been so good so far.

MRS. J. W. CAMP, JR.
Garden City, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I enjoy CM very much but was disappointed that there was no article on

flowers in the February issue. I thought you were going to have a series? . . . I just loved that first article [January] . . .

MRS. WALTER SULLIVAN
Linden, N. J.

♦ *We aren't planning to fade, nor are we even taking time out for second wind. Throwing, flowers, and other announced series will continue to be permanent CM subjects, but not necessarily on a strict monthly basis.—Ed.*

MONTY & PENNSY DUTCH

Gentlemen:

Our February issue arrived in today's mail, but we digest our CM so thoroughly that we've just gotten through our January issue.

As dabblers in Pennsylvania-German-style pottery, we say "bravo" and "let's have more" . . . by Marge Montgomery.

She is a master craftsman in an art that is almost lost. Your publication of her lettering guide ["Penmanship in Pottery," Jan.] is a contribution of tremendous value to all of us who work in the personalized pottery field . . .

RAY AND ANN WHITTAKER
Collegeville, Penna.

Gentlemen:

. . . May we have more from Mrs. Montgomery? Her work in this area is well known. She is a master craftsman and she can also write.

Many thanks for the first really helpful article I've seen on Penna. Dutch pottery (my first love).

MRS. CARLTON E. CUTLER
Havertown, Penna.

♦ *Sure. For more from Monty, turn to page 18.—Ed.*

ENAMELS AND CERAMICS

Gentlemen:

I have been a subscriber since your first issue [and] have admired your work until recently. Now, about one-half of your magazine is devoted to enameling and working with metal. One subscribing to CM would expect a magazine dealing exclusively with ceramics.

I understand there are many people interested in the art of enameling, but why not let them have their own magazine and let us ceramists have ours. Why not go into other crafts also if you are determined to deviate from ceramics?

HAL SWEENEY
Scranton, Penna.

♦ *Enamels are ceramics even though plastic clay isn't involved in the art. Enamel is glass: used as a coating on clay it's called a glaze; on metal, it's called an enamel. Deviationists? Nope!—Ed.*

Gentlemen:

Your magazine has been my inspiration, teacher and critic . . . As an amateur enamelist, my knowledge and experience was almost nil. But with CM I feel my work has improved a great deal . . . I thank you, and the enamelists who have contributed to your magazine so generously . . .

I do hope you will have more articles on mosaics, especially for small plaques, table tops, etc.

DEE FLORES
Ithaca, N. Y.

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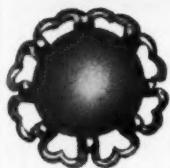
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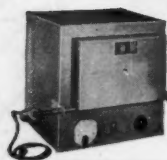


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Suggestions from our readers

GLAZE EFFECT

For an unusual effect, mix black sand with slip and brush on your leather hard ware. Bisque fire, then glaze with either an opaque or a clear glaze.

—Mrs. A. W. Green
San Carlos, Calif.

WHEEL-HEAD BAT

If you have been attaching bats to the throwing head of your wheel by pressing clay around the edges, you may want to try this technique which has proved more satisfactory to me.

Put a very shallow pool of thick slip on the wheel head and press the bat down on it. In a matter of seconds, the bat absorbs the water and the thin layer of clay acts as an adhesive and makes a very strong bond between the wheel and the bat. You can test the bond by twisting or pulling on the bat. If it moves, the slip may have been too thin or the bat too wet.

—Virginia D. Voelker
Asbury Park, N. J.

EXTRA SHELVES

Unglazed tile, broken or whole, make wonderful extra shelves in your kiln. They fit into odd spots and are excellent for jewelry and other small pieces.

—Josephine Walmer
Harrisburg, Pa.

CARVE PRESS MOLDS

I have labored hard on small clay models for jewelry only to run into trouble when I attempted to make the plaster press mold. I finally decided to carve the model in hard plaster and have met with much more success.

I pour small blocks of plaster, using square dishes, and I carve with any and all tools that I have at hand. It is very helpful to keep a small wad of

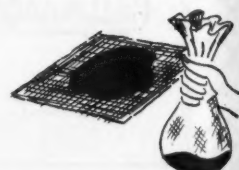
plastic clay at hand to take impressions as you carve and thus keep a constant check on the progress. As you know, everything must be done in reverse; the preliminary impressions keep you from carving too deeply and from making other mistakes.

For these tiny press molds, it isn't necessary to use pottery plaster; ordinary patching plaster, available in 5-pound boxes at most supply stores, works fine.

—Mrs. G. B. Hodges, Jr.
Williamsport, Pa.

SIMPLE SLING MOLD

Here is a quick and effective way to make free-form shapes. Cut a slab of clay into an oval or irregular shape and place flat in the center of a square of cloth (anything from cheesecloth to burlap). Pick up the ends of the cloth and hold them together in one hand, thereby suspending the clay in the bottom as if in a bag. Move your hand up and down a few times, thus forcing the clay down into the very bottom of the "bag"; at the same time, the cloth will pull the clay sides up, forming a free-form dish ready to dry. Then hang up the bag, as it



is, until the clay has hardened enough to hold its own shape.

If you don't like the shape of a piece, you can keep repeating the procedure until a pleasing shape is arrived at. And, if you want a flat bottom on the piece, thump it a few times on a flat surface while the clay is still soft.

—Mildred Halzman
Bronx, N. Y.

Dollars for your Thoughts

CM pays \$1 to \$5 for each item used in this column. Send your bright ideas to Ceramics Monthly, 4175 N. High St., Columbus 14, Ohio. Sorry, but we can't acknowledge or return unused items.

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Itinerary

Send show announcements early—Where to Show: three months ahead of entry date; Where to Go: at least six weeks before opening.

WHERE TO SHOW
★national competition

CALIFORNIA, Sacramento

May 16-July 1

Kingsley Art Club 31st Annual Exhibition at E. B. Crocker Art Gallery, 216 O St. Includes crafts. Open to residents of the Central Valleys. Jury; prizes. Entries due May 4,5. For blanks, write Mrs. George C. Brett, 2757 Curtis Way, Sacramento 18.

CONNECTICUT, Norwalk

June 8-July 8

Silvermine Guild of Artists Annual New England Exhibition. Media includes ceramic sculpture. Open to residents of New England. Jury; prizes. Fee, \$4. Work due May 11-14.

INDIANA, South Bend

May 30-June 3

Annual Regional Ceramic Exhibition at South Bend Art Association Galleries, 620 W. Washington Ave. Residents within 100 m. radius eligible. Fee, \$2. Blanks due May 1; work, May 1-6.

NEW YORK, Douglaston

May 6-19

★Art League of Long Island 26th Annual Spring Exhibition including ceramics. U. S. residents eligible. Jury; prizes. Fee, \$5. Work due Apr. 21. For details: Samuel Leitman, 44-21 Douglaston Pkwy.

OREGON, Portland

May 12-June 9

Annual Exhibition of Northwest Ceramics at Oregon Ceramic Studio, 3934 S. W. Corbett Ave. Eligible: residents of British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Jury; awards. Entries due Apr. 16-30. Write the Studio for blanks.

WHERE TO GO

CALIFORNIA, San Francisco

through April

9th Annual Exhibition of The Association of San Francisco Potters at M. H. De Young Memorial Museum.

FLORIDA, Clearwater

through April

Dutch Arts and Crafts (contemporary) at Florida Gulf Coast Art Center.

CERAMIC HOBBY SHOWS

"SOUTHWEST"

April 18-22

At Women's Building, State Fair Park, Dallas, Texas.

"EASTERN"

May 2-6

At Convention Hall, Asbury Park, N. J.

"GREAT LAKES"

May 16-20

At Masonic Temple, Detroit, Mich.

FLORIDA, Coral Gables

April 15-29

Fourth Annual Miami National Ceramic at Lowe Gallery.

GEORGIA, Atlanta

through April 15

American Craftsmen 1955 at Atlanta Art Association.

IOWA, Des Moines

through April 29

Eighth Annual Iowa Artists Show including all mediums; at Des Moines Art Center, Greenwood Pk.

KANSAS, Wichita

April 14-May 15

Eleventh National Decorative Arts-Ceramics Exhibition at Wichita Art Association, 401 N. Belmont Ave.

KENTUCKY, Louisville

through April 29

Louisville Art Center Annual (Kentucky and So. Indiana) at J. B. Speed Art Museum. Crafts included.

MASSACHUSETTS, Boston

April 9-April 27

Massachusetts Crafts of Today at the Society of Arts and Crafts, 145 Newbury.

MISSOURI, Springfield

through April 20

Twenty-Sixth Annual Exhibition; arts and crafts; regional. At Springfield Art Museum.

NEW JERSEY, Asbury Park

April 9-15

In conjunction with Cavalcade of Progress at Convention Hall: annual exhibit by members of the New Jersey Society of Ceramic Art, Inc.; demonstrations.

NEW YORK, Buffalo

through April 22

Western New York Artists (14 counties) annual at Albright Art Gallery.

NEW YORK, Kenmore

May 6

Annual Exhibit by Kenmore Ceramic Guild; Memorial Hall, 3-8 P.M.

OHIO, Dayton

through April 30

Design in Scandinavia—over 700 mass-produced pieces selected by top designers. At Dayton Art Institute.

OKLAHOMA, Norman

through April 15

California Designed—home furnishings and accessories including ceramics—at University of Oklahoma.

OKLAHOMA, Rockford

April 3-29

Work of Oklahoma Artists including ceramics; at Philbrook Art Center.

PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia

through April 15

American Jewelry and Related Objects (contemporary) at Philadelphia Art Alliance.

WEST VIRGINIA, Huntington

April 22-May 20

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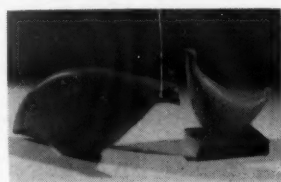
SHOW TIME



2



3



4



1

MICHIGAN ARTIST-CRAFTSMEN

TOP WINNER at the 11th annual Michigan Artist-Craftsmen Exhibition (held last month at the Detroit Institute of Arts) was Louis Raynor, East Lansing: his three stoneware pieces with slip decoration (5) were awarded the Founders Society Purchase Prize. Other winners among the 147 craftsmen represented included these ceramists: Robert Cremean, Cranbrook Academy of Art student, for stoneware bottles with copper-wire decoration (1); Donald Larkin, also a Cranbrook student, for sculpture (4); J. T. Abernathy, Ann Arbor, for bowl with white and brown brush decoration (2); and Marc Hansen, Grand Rapids, for a covered jar (3).



Something New Under the Sun—



balloons as molds

by REINHOLD P. MARXHAUSEN

Blown-up rubber spheres and tubes—the toy balloons that children love—are the answer to forming certain ceramic shapes when skill, equipment and time are at a minimum. By experimenting, I have found that these balloons can serve as ideal “hump molds” in that you never have to worry about how to remove the mold even though it may be completely surrounded by clay. Drape a slab of clay on the balloon, let the clay set, collapse the balloon and the mold is gone. It’s as easy as that!

Balloons in varied shapes and sizes can be purchased at any five-and-ten type of store (or the vendor in the park). From your selection, choose one that resembles the shape of the object you wish to produce—or let one of the balloons suggest an object to you. Blow it up to capacity to stretch the rubber, then let out a bit of air so that slack in the rubber can act as a buffer (something has to give when the clay begins to harden and shrink and if the balloon is too taut the clay will crack). The mouth of the balloon can be tied off with string; or twisted and secured with masking tape so that it can be undone easily and the air let out slowly when the clay has set.

When it comes to using this new-type mold, regard it, generally, as you would a plaster hump. But in order to facilitate drying and setting, sprinkle a bit of dry clay on the surface of the slab of clay which will be next to the rubber (unlike plaster, rubber will not absorb moisture; the inside surface of the clay will stay moist until the balloon is deflated).

The slab, as it is, can be draped around the balloon, welded together at the seams with slip, and then shaped by cutting away or adding clay until you achieve the creation you have in mind (facing page). But you may prefer to save time (and perhaps grief) by pre-cutting the slab to the general shape of the mold. In that case wrap a sheet of paper around the balloon, cut out a rough pattern and then cut the slab similarly.

In forming shapes on balloons, the inner push or buoyancy provides just enough resistance to permit ex-

perimenting and exploring. You can push a bit, pull a bit, with no danger of the pot’s caving in. You have the feeling that someone is inside holding the wall of clay out for you. This is particularly helpful when you are working on a small-necked bottle.

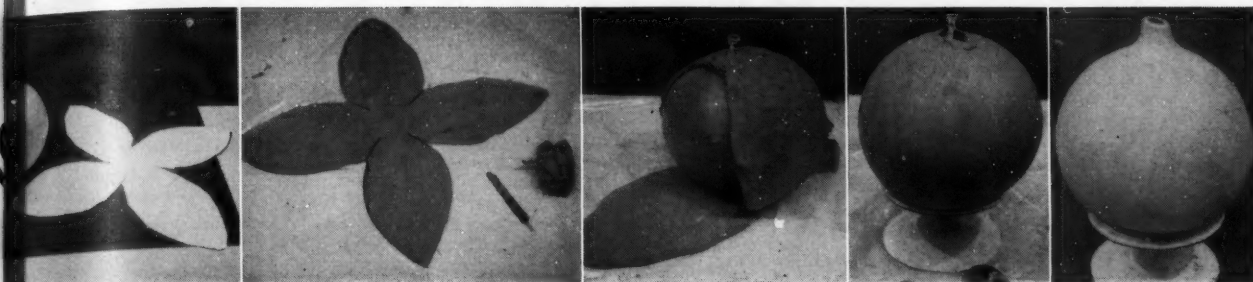
You do, however, have to get used to the unfamiliar feeling of give and bounce in the work under your hands. And a number of props (chunks of clay) are needed to hold the unfooted piece upright, especially during the setting process. (While forming and welding, I like to hold the work in my lap because, conveniently, it provides more surface area of support.)

When the clay has set enough to stand by itself—you can tell by the feel—the balloon should be deflated without delay. Remember that no drying will take place on the inside surface of the clay as long as it rests on the rubber. Deflate either by letting the air out gently or by puncturing with a pin. Fish the collapsed “mold” out with a wire or just leave it inside to burn out in the kiln.

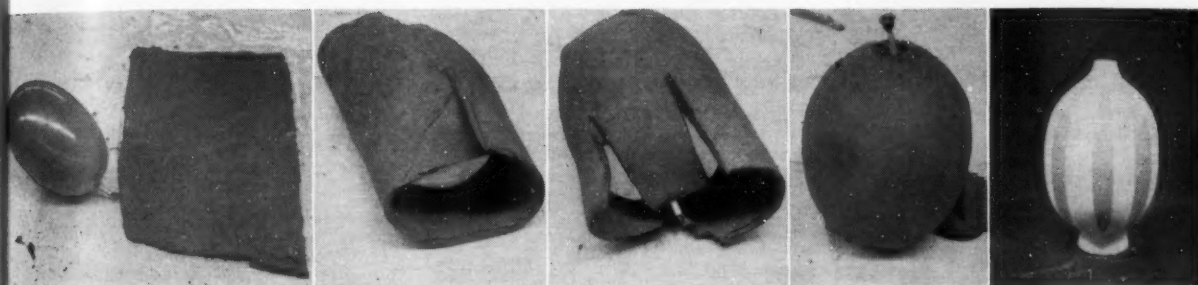
Extra parts, such as handles, legs, a foot, a spout, can be added to the basic shape once the clay has become firm. Moreover, it is not necessary, in the forming process, to follow the exact contour of the balloon. Thinking of it as a plaster hump mold, use all the surface or a portion of it; make shallow dishes or large-mouthed vases if you like. The only difference is that much more time will be required for the clay to set than would be the case if the hump were made of plaster or clay.

For the ceramist who plans to try out balloon molds, two general precautions are in order: although the balloon should be collapsed as soon as possible to facilitate drying, don’t release the support too soon; experiment with smaller objects until you get the *feel* of when to do what.

The method should save a lot of trouble. Don’t bother, for example, to make a head solid and then hollow it out for firing safety, or to make it hollow with wadded newspaper stuffed inside for support. Use air—with a balloon around it! •



PAPER PATTERN is used as a guide in this case. Clay is fitted to balloon and worked together. When clay sets, the "mold" is deflated.



WITHOUT PRE-SHAPING, a slab of clay can be wrapped around the balloon, then slashed as needed to make a snug fit. Extras—foot and neck—are added.



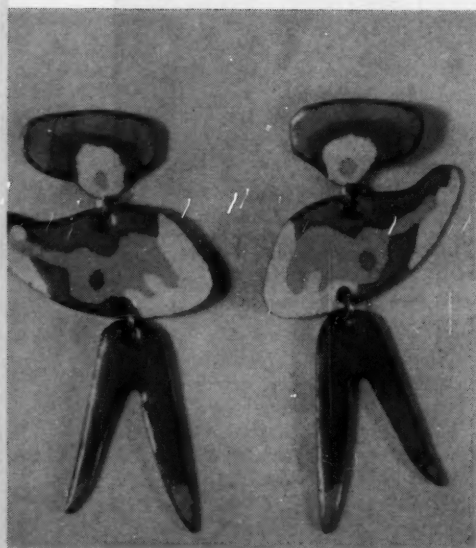
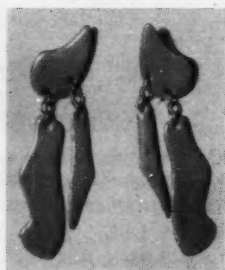
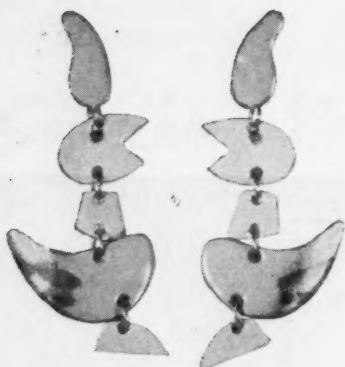
TOY BALLOONS are naturals as "hump molds" says the author, and the photos on this page bear him out. (Wise owl, left, came from grinning rabbit, above.)



HOURGLASS SHAPE above served as mold for coin-bank owl (l). Another balloon (r) was altered with masking tape to provide a mold for the vase shown.

MULTI-PIECE JEWELRY

Small Parts Make Mobile Earrings



Multi-piece jewelry should be carefully designed on paper before work is begun on the actual piece because practical aspects have to be taken into consideration. Multi-piece means the designs will consist of many parts which will probably be very small (you may have four or five parts to an earring, for example) and these parts will be cut out of metal which means they must be quite simple in shape.

Begin the design with rough sketches, just to acquire general ideas. I firmly believe in "pushing the pencil around" to put vague ideas into concrete form. How else can you come up with an idea that has possibilities? Even when this is accomplished, the shapes usually have to be simplified many times in order to facilitate cutting. (The sketches below show how a design might be developed from the first rough idea into a finished pattern.) When you have developed a good sketch in black-and-white values, choose the colors to be used and match them carefully with your color samples. Then make a final tracing of the design to work from.

For small pieces, 20-gauge copper is usually heavy enough. It is softened, to make cutting easier, by a pre-firing in the kiln for a few minutes. With either red or regular carbon paper being used, the tracing of the design is transferred to the copper, and then scratched in with a pointer

(carbon marks rub off during the cutting operation).

To show how multi-piece jewelry may be prepared, enameled and assembled, let us go through the steps involved in producing the little Mexican-musician earrings shown below.

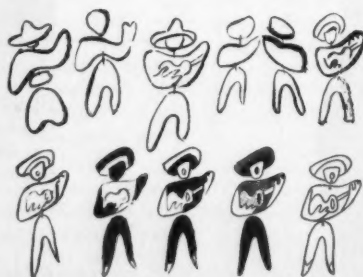
1. It is very difficult to cut a neat line when you are handling a large sheet of metal. So the shapes which are traced on the metal are first cut out roughly, then precisely along the scratched outlines. (I used ink lines here so they would show in the photograph.) Even then the shape may be rather crude but filing will refine it. After finishing the pieces, remember to invert one complete set so you will have a "right" and a "left."

2. Each piece, placed on a level, hard surface such as an old iron plate, is flattened by gentle pounding with a rawhide mallet. (An ordinary hammer covered with an old piece of leather to prevent marking the metal will do the job nicely.)

3. For the filing process, a small vice holds the pieces. It is lined with leather so it won't scratch the metal. Those shapes which are identical are put together in the vice and filed simultaneously so they will be alike. The file used is a medium-coarse one and, for the curves, a rat-tail; the filing is done diagonally across the edge of the metal, and the burr that forms is left on because its brittle teeth will keep enamel from receding at the edges.

If the metal is bent during the filing, it is again flattened on the hard surface with the rawhide mallet.

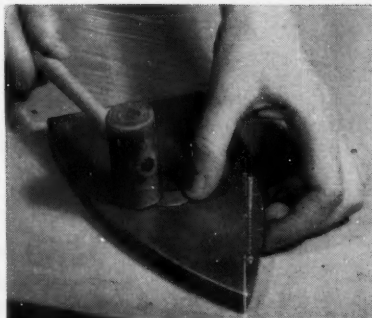
4. The exact spots where holes for jump rings are to be drilled are marked off with the sharp pointer and center punched. Each piece, in turn, is braced against a nail driven into a board to keep it from spinning (or, taped to the board with transparent tape), and drilled with a 5/64 or 1/16-inch drill. The drill is pressed firmly into the piece but the handle is turned slowly; the metal core peels out almost in one long strand like the



SIMPLE SHAPES are best for jewelry of many parts. Make sketches until you get a good rough idea, then develop the full detail. Earrings shown here are the finished demonstration pieces and others by the author.



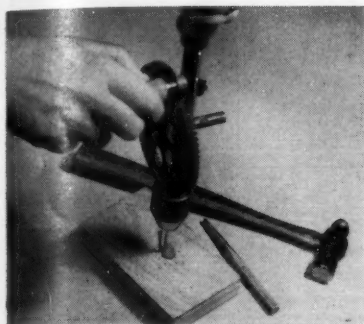
1. General shape is cut out roughly, then precisely along the scratched-in line.



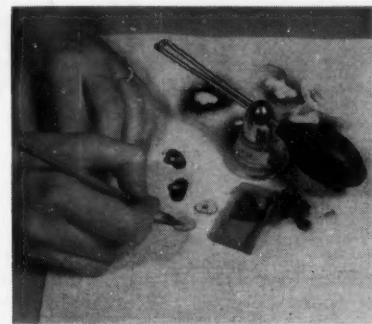
2. Each piece is flattened by gentle pounding with a rawhide mallet.



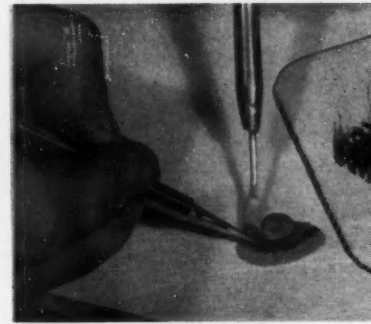
3. Held in a vice lined with leather, the edges of the pieces are filed smooth.



4. Holes for jump rings are center punched and drilled with 5/64- or 1/16-inch drill.



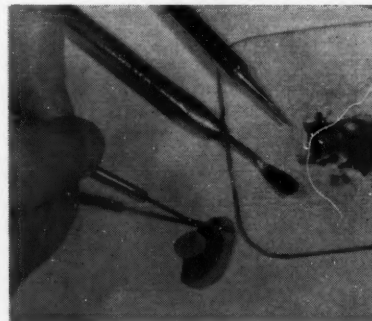
5. In counterenameling the backs, bare spots are left on pieces where findings go.



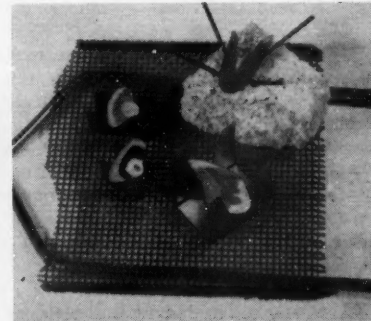
6. The several colors of the design for the top side are wet inlaid, one at a time.



7. The edge of each color is straightened, made neat, before next color is pushed up.



8. Joining line between colors is packed down with leveling tool held at right angle.



9. When enameling is finished, the pieces are fired; then stoned and cleaned as usual.

peeling of an apple.

The holes are then cleaned out with a small needle file (small holes tend to fill up with enamel and so require more careful handling), and the pieces are flattened once more with the mallet. When a piece is to be shaped or domed, however, it is held against the hard metal surface and tapped with the mallet. In preparation for the enameling process, all the parts are cleaned thoroughly in the regular manner.

5. A color which will blend with the colors to be put on the front of the earrings is chosen for counterenameling the backs. It may be either an opaque or a transparent but it

should not be a very soft-fusing enamel for this type burns out too rapidly (and you find the backs burned black after successive firings!).

The counterenamel may be applied by the sifting or by the wet-inlay method. In the case of tiny pieces, however, I prefer the latter because it takes less time. You don't have to take the numerous pieces back and forth for spraying with agar and sifting; or to cut tiny friskets to cover bare spots where findings are to go; and wet inlay makes a neater job. The bare spots can be made simply by picking up the enamel with a wet-pointed brush and then straightening the edges of the area.

When the counterenameling is

finished, the edges of all the pieces and the not-yet-enamelled top sides are wiped free of enamel. (It is easier to clean now than to stone later.) All the holes are cleaned with a pointer before firing; this is good practice because of the holes' tendency to fill with enamel. The pieces are then slightly underfired; they should look shiny and almost smooth.

6. Because the design calls for several different colors on the front, inlaying wet enamel will make it possible to finish the pieces in one firing. (The enamel has been sifted onto a wet mixing palette and sprayed with just enough water to saturate

(Please turn to Page 37)

Pottery of the Pennsylvania Dutch

by MARGUERITE MONTGOMERY

The following is the first part of a two-part article. Here, the author tells us something of the background of a "common" people whose pie plates, cooking pots and other hand-crafted items are now museum pieces. In the next installment, she will comment on the work of individual early potters and on making adaptations of the Pennsylvania-Dutch style. Readers will remember Mrs. Montgomery's previous article, "Penmanship in Pottery," in the January issue. (For more about the author, see "Ceram-Activities," page 35.)—Ed.

A strong self-sufficient independent people live on the rich fertile land of Eastern Pennsylvania. They are the Pennsylvania Dutch whose forebears came from the Rhine Valley late in the seventeenth and early in the eighteenth centuries bringing with them the character traits which have persisted in each generation down to the present day. The first arrivals, together with some Swiss and some French Huguenots, came to America at the invitation of William Penn.

We are wont to think of the Pennsylvania Dutch only in terms of *quaint*—quaint dress, quaint speech, quaint handicrafts. In fact, however, they are a composite in which varying degrees of worldliness as well as many sects and dialects are represented. Among them, the Amish, Mennonite, or River Brethren may be easily distinguishable because of "plain" garb, bonnet or beard; but the Lutheran, Reformed or Catholic looks the same as his neighbor of English descent.

Although the dialects of these people may differ slightly in different sections, German was originally the predominant language. The group is bilingual to this day, a fact accounting for certain expressions which we who speak only English find rather quaint.

As for the "Dutch" designation: there are various versions of how it came into existence. According to one authority, Benjamin Franklin started it by calling the newcomers the "dumb Dutch" when they refused to buy his English-language newspaper. But another source believes it comes from a misunderstanding of the meaning of the word *deutsch*: when the German asked "*Kannst du Deutsch schwetza?*" [Can you speak German?] the English thought it meant "Can you talk Dutch?" Whatever the origin, the name "Pennsylvania Dutch" stuck and is, in fact, preferred by many of those so-called.

A thousand years of peace was the promise William Penn held out to the people who migrated to his lands. Farmers for the most part and tired of devastating wars at home, they came with skills and hopes for peaceful existence. They fashioned crude tools of wood. They cleared the fields and found red-clay deposits, and the clay was used to form eating and cooking dishes. As they were farmers in Europe, so were they farmers here. A man might be a potter but it was his responsibility first to be a farmer supplying the needs of his family, only second a potter supplying the needs of the community.

Love of fine European ceramic ware was strong in these immigrants (one of the potters among them expressing it



SLIP WARE with sgraffito:
G. Hubener (late 18th Cent.).



PIE PLATE with serrated edge
is slip decorated.





PLANT LIFE springs from urn which represents the earth: this recurring fertility theme is seen in sgraffito-decorated slip ware above. Fine balance in slip design on jar (r) is characteristic.



An Early American Folk Art ...

PEACOCK, often-used Oriental symbol, appears in Hubener plate which bears his typical double border of lettering.

Photos: (l & top r) Philadelphia Museum of Art; others, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

in an inscription on an early piece of Pennsylvania-Dutch ware):

*I love everything fine,
Although it isn't mine,
And though I never own it
Yet still I have the joy of it.*

At the time, the arts and crafts of Persia and the Orient were highly regarded in Europe; and simultaneously a tulip craze was sweeping the Continent. Fortunes were made and lost in the sale of bulbs; the tulip became a favored decorative motif for the embellishment of tin, wood and cloth as well as clay. Among the Pennsylvania Dutch, this tulip was used to such an extent that the pottery decorated with it became known as tulip-ware. Their word for tulip—borrowed from the Persian *dulband* long ago — is still *dullebahan*.

In other ways, too, the Oriental influence is reflected in the earlier Pennsylvania - Dutch designs, some seeming to have been taken from Persian rugs or tapestries. We see, for example, the tree of life, crudely con-

ceived on pottery but exquisitely executed in needlework; the peacock, native of the Orient, occurring frequently as a symbol of reproductivity.

Urns with flowers springing from them are also found on many of the old Pennsylvania plates. The urn represents the earth; the plant has been regarded as life springing from the earth. Thus, coming from the earth, are first the blades or leaves, then the flower. Usually in the flower is the seed which, when it goes back into the earth, represents the cycle of reproduction. (Inscriptions also appear to have been borrowed from the Orient for one plate bears this in German:

*To paint flowers is common but only
God is able to give them fragrance.*

The same verse, with the exception of the second word, has been attributed to an Oriental proverb: "To grow flowers . . .")

Not all of the Pennsylvania-Dutch birds and flowers can be traced to
(Please turn the page)



Photos: (above & below) Philadelphia Museum of Art;
r. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

USUALLY, design was done in either slip or sgraffito (l)
but occasionally techniques were combined
as below: (l) slip with sgraffito lettering;
(r) sgraffito strokes highlighting polychromed design.



sources or identified. (When an un-identifiable bird grew out of the craftsman's imagination, it became known as a *Distelfink* which, under the circumstances, seems to me a fine name.) The early potter had no formal art training; and he tried to depict a combination of old-world memories and the natural beauties found in the new country. Consequently, his style had a freshness and a charm which many of us try to imitate but fall short of.

The ceramic pie plate of the Pennsylvania Dutch was a unique creation as were its fillings (fruit and meat were plentiful so concoctions of great variety came out of their ovens). The pie plate, itself, was gently concave and without foot or rim; it was rather flat so that the pie could be slipped out easily. The early pieces were glazed on the inside only and had serrated edges.

Everyday ware generally was glazed on one side only so that the pieces could be stacked in the kiln without the use of stilts; they were stacked one row on top of the other in pyramid fashion. Wood-burning, the kilns required several days to fire and even longer to cool. (Riots at the kilns when the demand for utensils was greater than supply are on record.)

Undoubtedly, the Pennsylvania Dutch did not decorate their very first pieces of pottery. These were probably undated and unsigned though we have no certain way of distinguishing such pieces from later unidentified ware of

Some for Everyday



TULIP WARE became known as such because the favored flower, in stylized form, appears so consistently. Smudges of color on these plates is typical of early work.



Photos this page: Philadelphia Museum of Art

MOTIFS were often borrowed but some, like the bird called "a distillink," came strictly from the imagination.

Base, Some Just for Fancy

similar shape and glaze. When they began to decorate, three techniques were used—slip trailing, sgraffito and polychrome, the latter being the least commonly employed. Occasionally, two techniques were combined in the same piece (sgraffito border with slip design in the center, for example; or sgraffito strokes emphasizing the elements of a polychrome decoration).

Slip was the most commonly used for decoration, white New Jersey slip on red Pennsylvania clay. The earliest designs were usually composed of wavy parallel lines and dots. They were quickly done, the slip being trailed from a cup having two to six openings. For the most part the pieces were not signed or dated. (Later, slip ware in the form of commemorative and/or personalized pieces began to be produced.)

Slip-trailed decoration on everyday plates was somewhat different from the general idea of such pieces. Since the plates were meant to be used, they had to be smooth. So after the slip was trailed on and had dried a bit, it was beaten into the clay body. None of the slip was permitted to stand out in relief for high spots would have been

the first to wear off. The piece was then draped over a mold and dried for firing.

As slip decoration became more studied and the subjects worked out in detail, sgraffito ware (the design scratched through slip) was also developed. In the earlier examples of sgraffito, pictorial representation of phrases from the Bible was the concern of the potter. The time of the lily was identified with the tulip flower, symbolic of love and peace; the turtle dove, the pearl of great price, the pomegranate — through these and other motifs, the potter expressed thankfulness to his Maker for his place in the new homeland. As his adept fingers gained more skill, he bordered ware with verses from the Scriptures, bits of hymns and pious expressions, in either English or German:

Consider the lilies and how they grow.

*For lo, the winter is past . . .
and the voice of the turtle is heard
in our land.*

Blessed are they that hunger . . .

(Please turn to Page 32)



AS SYMBOL of reproductivity, the peacock was very popular.



LETTERING for folk sayings was an important design element.



EUROPEAN style (example above) was admired and imitated.



ANYONE FOR CHESS?

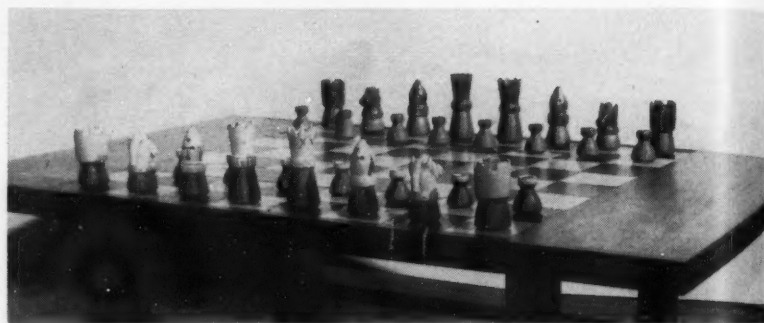
The Ceramic Side of a Prize-winning Set of Chessmen

by WILLIAM H. WILBANKS

Bill Wilbanks' ceramic chess set won a top prize—the Clay Club Award of Merit—at the annual Northwest Craftsmen's exhibition in Seattle (last year). How about recreating the process involved in such a work, for the benefit of CM readers, we asked him. He would be "pleased and honored," he said — and forthwith produced the following account.—Ed.

About that chess set: Originally, I sketched the basic idea of each piece roughly on newsprint, then threw a few trial pieces which changed considerably from the sketch to the round. But I let them sit around the shop for months before taking up the idea again (and then it was because I urgently wanted a chess set for myself).

All of the pieces — kings, queens, knights, bishops, rooks, and pawns — were thrown on the wheel: when throwing repetitive shapes, as in the case of the chessmen, I usually work from a ten-to-twelve-pound cone of clay, throwing each piece off the top [see "Throwing from a Lump of Clay" by Tom Sellers, CM, September]. The clay was a fine-grained, dark-red terra cotta which throws and carves easily.



The thrown pieces were put aside to dry overnight before being worked on further — except for the knight. This piece, shaped like a horse's head, was thrown in a tall cylinder shape with bulges corresponding to the jaw and neck. Before letting it dry, I cut a long, thin diamond of clay from the neck and jaw bulges, pressed the sides of the neck together, and bent the cylinder down so that the jaw fitted over the neck. Finger dents made the eyes, and the ends of the diamond cut-out taken from the neck formed the ears. A flat strip of clay was added for the mane.

When the pieces were leather-hard,

I trimmed the bottoms with a knife and did the carving. The rooks were notched on the top edge to carry out the idea of the castle. The bishop's hat was embellished with a St. Andrew's cross front and back, and carved at the sides to give it a more hatlike appearance. The king's crown received vertical lines around the base and short notches along the top edge; the queen's crown was also notched but with long V's, and holes were cut in a circle around the base. No carving was necessary for the pawns and knights.

The pieces were bisque fired at 1800°F. and partially glazed in either glossy white or matt black, a color combination used also for the tiles which comprise the chessboard (glaze formulas given at the end of text). Each piece, held upside down, was dipped in the glaze only as far as the lower edge of the shoulder, leaving the red clay showing at the bottom section which in all the pieces is basically the same shape; this, I felt, would give a feeling of continuity which might not otherwise be apparent.

The thirty-two chessmen and sixty-four tiles made a full load in my gas-fired kiln. I fired to cone 5 in a twenty-hour cycle—eight hours up and twelve hours down.

Set into a walnut-finished table
(Please turn to Page 36)



KNIGHT is thrown as a cylinder, then is cut and bent to shape. Other chessmen get



simple treatment. Wilbanks throws pawns from top of cone of clay (r) in Oriental fashion.



THROWING ON THE POTTER'S WHEEL



by TOM SELLERS



1. Roughen base and . . .



2. Twist on small lump of clay . . .



3. Center, open, pull up wall . . .



4. And you have a thrown foot.

how to ADD a foot

By throwing from a small chunk of clay attached to the bottom of the pot, you can easily make a rather high foot rim, or stem.

Such a foot *could* be made by tooling in the usual way (see "Cutting the Foot Rim," January, 1955) if enough clay were to be left in the bottom of the pot, but this way of obtaining a high foot requires considerable tooling, time and care. Moreover, the heavy mass of clay would undoubtedly present a drying problem. It is a good idea, in any case, to know how to throw a foot because there are times when you find you want a high foot but the pot has already been thrown and not enough extra clay has been left in the bottom. (Occasionally, a beginning potter fails to leave enough clay in the bottom for even a normal foot rim; the technique to be described here is one he can use to salvage his pot.) Knobs for lids, incidentally, can be thrown in the same way as the stemlike foot.

This foot is thrown when the pot has dried to the leather-hard stage—the point at which you would ordinarily cut a foot rim. Inverted, the pot is centered, fastened to the wheel head with clay keys and tooled as usual, but extra clay is *not* left for the foot.

The area where the foot is to be is dampened and scored (1). A small, smooth ball of clay (wedged, of course) is fastened to the roughened area with a twisting motion of the hand to insure a good weld with the pot (2). Then the clay is very carefully centered, opened, and pulled up to the desired height and shape (3, 4) as in regular throwing.

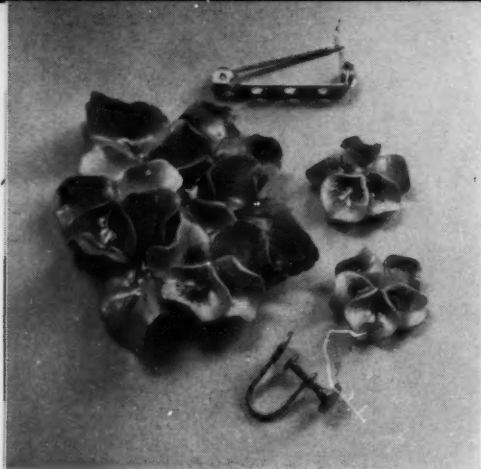
When the stem is finished the pot is returned, still inverted, to the damp box and allowed to dry *very slowly* as a precaution against the foot's cracking off.

Here are a few tips which will help you in learning to throw a stemlike foot:

In the throwing process, use a minimum amount of water so that it will not flow down the walls and soften the rim of the pot where the clay keys attach it to the wheel.

If the wall of the pot is thin, use a delicate touch in the centering operation so the pot won't become deformed.

Above all, work as rapidly as you can when throwing a high foot so that the pot will not have a chance to become too soft from water and pressure. ●



Flowers from Clay (3)

THE PANSY

demonstrated by BEA MATNEY

Do you know what a pansy looks like? No doubt you can easily recognize various flowers on sight, but do you really know how many petals the simpler flowers have, what their shape is, and how they are grouped to form the flower?

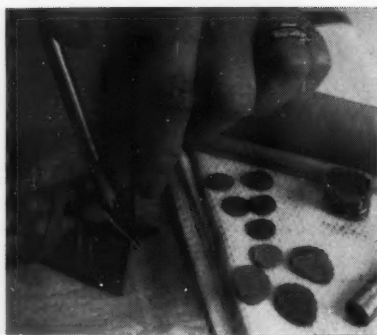
These things and more should be familiar to you if you plan to make flowers from clay. Just as the sculptor studies the body — the skeleton, the muscles, the entire structure — so should you study the various flowers. The best approach is to carefully observe a real flower, picking it apart piece by piece, learning how the various segments go together to make the whole. If fresh flowers are not available, study photographs in books, catalogs or on seed packets. After studying pansies, you will know that each one has five petals arranged in a particular way.

Soft colors in wide variety are found in pansies and for this reason the colored clays for flowers are well suited for the motif. Although you can use white clay, decorating after the bisque firing with underglazes, overglazes, or both, Mrs. Matney prefers to use the colored clays, thus eliminating the need for overall coloring of the leaves and flowers.

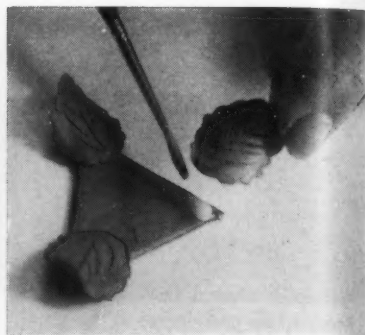
The fundamentals of making flowers, including details on the materials and the procedures, were carefully outlined in the first article of this series (January). A review of this material would be helpful to beginners. Now, let's watch Mrs. Matney's demonstration.

1. A small lump of clay is broken from the bulk quantity (left in its air-tight package), kneaded in one hand, and then rolled out with a small rolling pin. All the shapes to be used are then quickly cut out and set on a damp towel so that they will retain their moisture. (If you work with different colored clays, the roll-

(Please turn to Page 37)



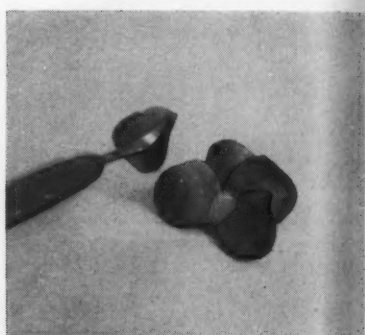
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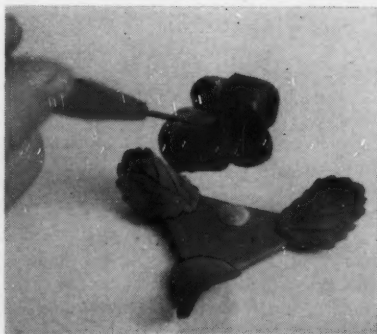
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3



4



5



6



CM briefs...

Decorate with String

by MILDRED and VERNON SEELEY

If you want to create a pottery decoration that is fresh and clean and "modern" looking, try string. With only a little help, string will fall quite naturally into graceful, flowing lines which are retained after firing. This you can see in the finished examples shown here (the work of Dr. Sue Hickmont of Oneonta State Teachers College).

Work on bisque-fired ware; and, although such shapes as vases and tumblers can be decorated with string once the technique is under control, it would be easier at the beginning to work on a plate, bowl or other open, flat shape.

Sponge the piece as usual to remove dust and then apply a heavy coat of glaze over the surface (1). When the glaze is dry, the piece is ready to receive the string.

Heavy button thread will do as string for the trial runs. Since a long thread might tangle, it is better to work with several short strands—each about a foot long. Wet the threads with warm water and place them between paper towels to remove excess moisture. Then, holding it by the end with a pair of tweezers, dip a strand in heavy glaze and make sure the entire length becomes heavily coated. Now hold the string over the piece to be decorated and

slowly lower it onto the surface (2) according to the design plan you have in mind (it will be too late to make a change once the string is in place!) Exploit the pleasing natural curves that the string forms as it settles.

Use other lengths of the glaze-covered thread as needed to complete the design. Then let the piece dry. After firing, you will find the string has burned out leaving the design clean and intact.

The same procedure can be used for decorating steep-sided pottery. Such shapes can be held in a horizontal position while the string is being lowered into place; since it is wet with glaze, the string will adhere securely to the surface.

The choice of string to be used in this type of decorating depends on the effect desired: it need not be of any one size or type. Finer thread will produce a design that is delicate in feeling; heavy string or yarn, on the other hand, will give a bolder, stronger line. Combinations of different sizes may be worked out.

Color is also a matter of preference. (Strings glazed in more than one color can, of course, be used in the one design.)

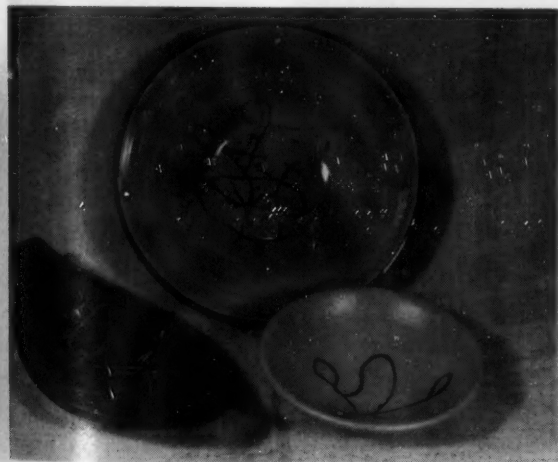
This technique of decorating is an intriguing one. You never quite know what turn the string will take as you play it out on the surface. But if you don't force it, you may be sure the turn will be pleasing to the eye.—Oneonta, N. Y.



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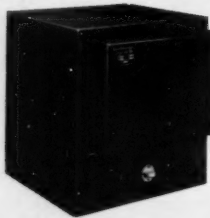
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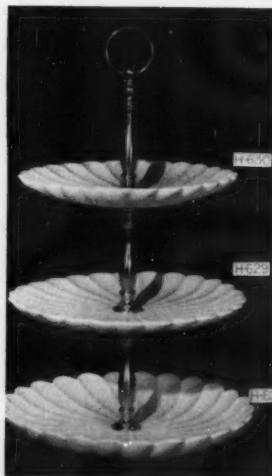
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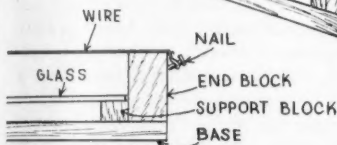
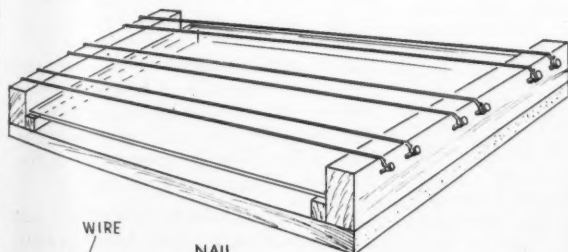
Spraying Platform

so simple you need only study the illustration to be able to make the device.

When a glaze, engobe, or similar material is sprayed on a piece, it usually collects in puddles around the base. The strung-wire platform prevents this completely. The sheet of glass which rests below the wire platform collects the oversprayed glaze which is ordinarily discarded and which often amounts to half of all glaze used, if you do a lot of spraying.

The platform becomes the permanent place to spray, eliminating the frequent, irksome job of clearing off a work area. The only cleanup you need do thereafter is a simple matter of running a damp cloth over the parallel wires.

When I recently produced several hundred small ceramic pins, each requiring several operations, I made a number of work racks also strung with wire. I could then pick up many pieces at a time by lifting a spatula or flat stick upward between the wires. This sped up handling, and eliminated any need to touch the sprayed surfaces. The racks were used for all other preliminary operations—touch-up, scraping, dusting, and underglazing, so that once molded, dried and placed on a rack, the pieces were never again touched until they were glaze-fired. —Noble D. Carlson, Wickliffe, Ohio.



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THERE'S MORE TO FIRING THAN TEMPERATURE

Many amateurs seem to be bothered by a question that I am asked again and again: *how high do you fire, at what degree . . . ?* Whenever possible I answer that I don't know. I do that to bring home the point that enamels have to be handled in a very different way than pottery. Enamelers: relax! Most of the worry about degrees belongs to the potter.

It happens that there is no automatic heat control on my kiln, and I don't feel the need for it. (Mine is a gas kiln so there are no wire units and therefore much less danger of its getting out of order through overheating.) While it is true that automatic controls can be lifesavers, especially in the case of electric kilns, it takes more than a device to fire enamels well. The beginner is inclined to feel so secure with an automatic control that he thinks all he has to do is follow a formula, fire at 1596°F., set the clock and wait for the kiln to turn out a perfect enamel. Most of the time it comes out not perfect but more or less overfired. Sad as that is, it is less important than a more far-reaching consequence: depending completely on automatic control, the beginner forgets to learn to control his technique. Instead, he allows himself to be controlled by a gadget.

Knowing the melting points of the various enamels is one thing, and there is nothing, of course, to say against that. But remember this: if left in the kiln only a short moment too long, even with the control set at the exact degree, your enamel will be overfired. Yet it can emerge as a perfect piece from a kiln set as high as 2000°F.—if taken out at the right moment!

How do you catch that most important and oh-so-fleeting instant? Well, this is where the enameler has a great advantage over the potter. The enameler can open the door of his kiln whenever he wants to look at his work of art while it is firing, without harming anything. He can observe the melt-

ing procedure from beginning to end. Isn't he lucky?

This is my best advice to beginners who want to learn the technique so well that their enamels can be taken seriously eventually: turn on your kiln, leave it alone for about 20 to 30 minutes, depending on how long it takes the heating chamber to get hot. Now watch it turn from dark red to bright red to orange. Orange is what I want for my enamels and also for my temperature. It is just right, good and hot, but not too hot. So, if you care to try to work *my* way, set your automatic control at the point of temperature reached and don't worry about it any more. (Working without controls, I turn the heat down when the color of the muffle or kiln wall turns yellow. Yellow heat is too hot to work with comfortably and you have to hurry terribly to get pieces out of the fire in time to avoid overfiring.)

So much for temperature. Now put your enamel in the kiln. Until you are experienced enough to judge by instinct the time required for firing a particular piece, watch it constantly through the peephole or, if you have none, open the kiln door slightly to have a look. This latter way will bring the temperature down, of course; so make up for the loss by turning the kiln a bit higher when it begins to get down too much.

Watching the enamel in the melting process from the beginning, you will notice the following: first it loses all its color and appears dark; the texture is like sandpaper; then it changes to red with an uneven texture like orange peel. Now—on your toes! It turns to a glowing gloss and out of the fire it must come—but instantly. Don't hesitate. Don't look around for a tool (prepare for this before you start the procedure). *Get the piece out.* Every second of firing counts when an enamel has reached maturity.

Observe the few and simple rules that have been suggested here, and you will never cry again over an enamel that, *all on its own*, has overfired against your wishes!

Quick Dryer for Jewelry

The drying of small pieces such as earrings, pins and the like can be accelerated without ill effect to the ware. This is particularly true when the pieces involved have been made in a press mold because the mold absorbs some of the

moisture and, if the drying isn't too rapid, there will be no cracking.

I have put this theory to work recently in an effort to find a way to hasten the production of ceramic jewelry. I lay a sheet of metal across the tops of two tin cans from which the tops and bottoms have been removed, and then place the entire assembly on top of a room-heating stove. As quickly as I remove a piece from a press mold, I place it on the metal drying sheet. (It is a good idea to check the drying progress and make sure the piece is not receiving too much heat, thereby creating tiny cracks and fissures. If you cannot regulate the temperature of the stove, use different-sized pairs of cans to raise or lower the metal sheet as needed.)

It takes only a short time to make enough pieces in my press molds to fill my kiln. By the time the last piece is made, the first pieces are dry enough for decorating. By the time the underglaze decorations have been applied to the last pieces, the first ones are ready for glazing. As soon as they are glazed, they are returned to the metal sheet and in short order they are completely dry and ready for firing.

I have found that this procedure enables me to do small items in half the time. In many instances I have been able to complete a firing in the same day the pieces were started.—Arthur Witchey, Port Orchard, Wash.

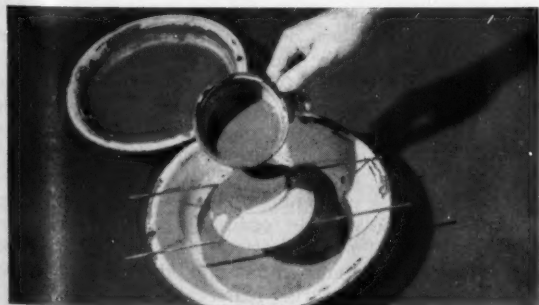
Pour Your Glaze

There are many advantages in applying glazes by pouring rather than spraying and brushing. You will be impressed with the speed with which you can glaze pieces—and this is particularly important if you have

a large number to be decorated and glazed. You can obtain a smooth, even application (more difficult with a brush), and you have absolutely no waste (which you get when spraying).

On the negative side, you need a larger quantity of glaze than for brushing or spraying. Moreover, the thickness of the glaze must be carefully regulated so that too thin or too thick a layer will not build up on the piece.

The procedure is simple. Pour glaze inside the vessel; swish it around; then pour it out. For the outside, support the piece on two wires and pour glaze overall. It's that easy; but do not try this glazing method on thinly cast green ware. The pieces will more than likely become soggy, and crumble and break. Use it on heavy green ware or on bisque.—Arlene Harris, Detroit, Mich.



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THE OVERGLAZE PAGE



THE HOLST NOTEBOOK

by ZENA S. HOLST

♦ *My luster painting does not have an iridescent quality and looks streaked. I try to brush smoothly but do not get the effects which I have seen in other people's work.*

You evidently apply the luster with long strokes of the brush, which give the streaked effect, and you are too exacting in the application. Try short, stippling and swirling motions with the brush, and very unevenly. Do not smooth out with brush strokes because this removes the iridescence. Think of lusters as a mottled background and not one that is painted on. Application with your finger is often better than with a brush. If you do not receive a good coverage in the first fire, so much the better. A second application in the same manner will give a more beautiful finish and be more durable. Patting with a silk pad also removes much of the iridescence, so avoid patting except in the case of the very dark lusters which increase in beauty with several smooth paintings and repeated firings.

♦ *What is the difference in the use of "best black" and "outlining black"?*

Use "best black" for all flat painting. "Outlining black" has a hard gloss and is used (with sugar) when lines and dots in slight relief are desired. (Sugar-solution formula is 1 part sugar to 7 parts outlining black.)

♦ *Can I wash out veins in leaves with turpentine after the paint is dry?*

Definitely, no! Turpentine always runs into the painting. Scratch out lines with a sharp tool or toothpick. For any other clean-up, use water and a sable brush.

♦ *Is it possible, for dark roses, to get a good deep red that is not on the purplish side?*

Yes, if you use imported pigments. I have not found anything comparable in domestic manufacture but there are several domestic supply companies which have a good choice of imported colors. Get the Dresden reds in carmine, magenta, maroon and ruby. The English rose shades are very good. Other imported colors of special

quality are the lilac and lavender shades, coral, fuchsia, and of course the royal purple colors.

♦ *What are powdered glazes for?*

The technique of using the powdered glazes sold for overglaze work is a very delicate one. The purpose is to give a higher gloss to colors, and the glaze is dusted over the painting. The technique requires extensive study because all colors will not take an extra glazing and often the glaze will eat up the color or leave it creamy-looking.

♦ *My liquid metals are congealing. What should I use to thin them?*

Essence, a thinning product, is specifically for this purpose.

♦ *Why does liquid gold crawl and pull away from wax-pencil lines?*

If the metal is applied just up to the lines, you will not have this difficulty. It is easier to outline the design with India ink before filling in with liquid gold. All metals and lusters will pull away from either the wax-pencil or graphite lines made in the transferring of a pattern.

♦ *A studio speaks of "gold" firing when I take my china to be fired. What is meant by this?*

This is an expression started by hobbyists before the old art of china painting was introduced to the studios. At that time, gold was the only overglaze decoration used by the ceramists. Care had to be taken not to overfire the gold on certain kinds of glazed art bodies or it would crackle, slurr or be milky looking. As soon as experience was gained in the use of other overglaze decorations, it was learned that there were special golds made for different types of ceramic ware. Today, there is no excuse for having to consider the gold alone as a controlling factor in the firing temperature if the proper kind of gold has been used. All pigments used in overglaze painting must be compatible with the ceramic body; that is, with the soft or hard composition. The body determines the maturing temperature of the firing.



Answers to Questions

conducted by KEN SMITH

Q. How do you keep gum solution from clogging the atomizer (when used for copper enameling)? What kind of atomizer do you recommend?

A. Kathe Berl says: "If your atomizer is clogged, it means the gum solution is too thick. Blow clear water through the atomizer to rinse it clean after finishing work with the gum solution. I use and recommend a simple mouth atomizer similar to the type used to fix charcoal drawings."

Q. Can you recommend some type of label that is quickly made and will remain "permanently" on glass jars? So far, my students have been very successful in ridding my glaze and slip jars of any and every type of label I have tried.

A. Cellophane tape (like Scotch brand) will do the job. You can identify the contents of the jar on an ordinary piece of paper and cover this completely with the tape, leaving a generous amount on each side and across the top to affix to the jar. The cellophane tape holds tenaciously to glass and, of course, it is waterproof as well as smudge proof. This should defy even the most adept students.

Q. I have difficulty doing fine-line work in gold with a pen or brush. It does not flow smoothly and, if I thin it, it turns out dull or a purple color. I have tried all kinds of pens and small brushes and have even tried heating the article to be decorated.

A. You should not be having this much trouble according to our overglaze adviser, Zena Holst, who offers the following: "There are cartridge pens for holding small amounts of liquid gold which work very nicely. These are available under various trade names from most supply companies.

"You will find that a heavier consistency is best for outlining with either a brush or pen. Paste metals can be softened with pure oil of lavender (never turpentine!) for outlining. The best liquid gold would be liquid coin gold; however, this would not give as bright an effect. Liquid bright gold can also be used satisfactorily; however, it should never be thinned. And, if it is not thick enough, pour a small amount into a small, flat receptacle and allow surplus oil to evaporate. Avoid buying cheap grades of gold that have been extended!"

Q. I have trouble with decals powdering off after firing. These particular decals are quite old; could that be the difficulty?

A. Ceramic materials are virtually ageless. If the decals haven't cracked or peeled, then they should be just as good today as they were when they were first made. If they powder off, it may be that you are not firing to a high enough temperature. It may also be that they were not properly made originally and do not contain enough flux to enable them to soften and become incorporated with the glaze underneath at the firing temperature.

Q. Can you tell me whom I should contact to obtain overglaze crayons or pencils? Or do such things exist?

A. To the best of my knowledge a successful overglaze crayon is not commercially available. You will have to be content with the regular overglaze materials.

All subscriber inquiries are given individual attention at CM; and, out of the many received, those of general interest are selected for answer in this column. Direct your inquiries to the Questions Editor; please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

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Pennsylvania Dutch Pottery

(Begins on Page 18)

*God bless this house and all who
here go in and out,
God bless altogether and in addition
the whole country.*

*Dear Father in Heaven,
What Thou givest me I eat without
question.*

It was only after satisfying the housewife's demand for "useful" ware, however, that the potter had time to decorate special pieces, and these were rarely subjected to everyday use. Placed in a spot of honor, on the mantelpiece or in the hutch cupboard, they were "just for fancy."

OUR HERITAGE from the early Pennsylvania-Dutch potters constitutes what the tulip-ware authority, Dr. Edwin A. Barber, has aptly called "a ceramic literature." It is an enduring record of the culture of their people, for the religious theme though constant is not the only one expressed in their clay. Bits of lore, old German sayings, dialects, customs which might otherwise have been forgotten, attitudes and episodes in the daily life of these "common" folk were depicted and inscribed:

*Eating is for existence and life
Drinking is also good besides.*

*This dish is made of earth
When it breaks the potter laughs
Therefore take care of it.*

*In olden times it was so
That an old man's words were taken
as true.*

A wry, homely sense of humor crops up frequently. This humor—and the spirit of independence that persists to this day—are illustrated in the story of a potter and a minister. The minister commissioned a set of plates to be inscribed with verses appropriate to his position as spiritual leader. The potter arrived at the parsonage to discuss the order. Noon hour—the usual time for the main meal of the day—came and went but the discussion continued. Dinner was served hours late. Apparently the potter was not pleased with the delay for when the completed set was delivered to the minister it included an extra plate inscribed:

*I have never been in a place
Where people eat their dinner so late
In the year 1812.*

(To be continued: in the next and concluding installment, the author will highlight individual old potters and comment on modern adaptations.) ●

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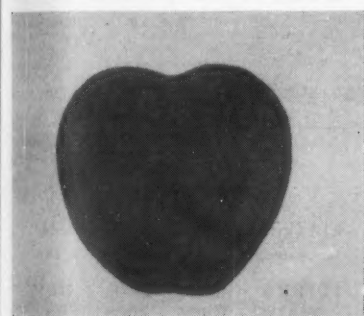
A Painting Lesson

by MADGE TUMMINS

Requests for instructions on painting specific motifs have been arriving since the inception of this column was announced. Most frequently requested are fruit, vegetable and flower motifs. We are, of course, happy to oblige, although it was felt advisable first to cover the fundamental information on underglazes and on various brush strokes. Now that these have been reviewed (January, February, March), we will utilize this information and show how a specific motif can be painted, using translucent underglazes in combination with the opaque underglazes.

One of the simpler of designs is a green apple (the red apple was briefly covered last month). Here, we will go over the design in detail, using step-by-step sketches.

1. Lightly sketch the motif on the green ware, using a soft ordinary pencil. Then load the large sable brush



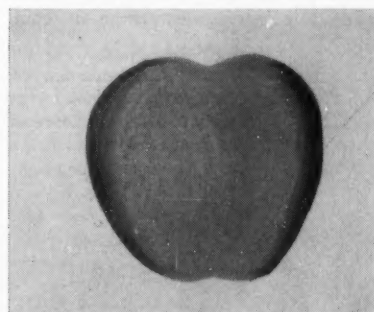
with CHARTREUSE *opaque* underglaze and completely fill in the sketched outline, using as many coats as the manufacturer recommends for good coverage.

Although this is a simple enough procedure, many beginners run into difficulty at this point. If the underglaze is applied too heavily, it can chip away from the body after bisque or glaze firing. If the coverage is thin, the color will appear to have "burned out" in the kiln. You will have to learn by trial and error not only how many coats of underglaze to apply, but how *thick* the underglaze should be. If it is too thick for good brushability, thin it with medium (rather than water—see March).

2. Now apply the shadows, using

translucent underglaze applied by the half-brush stroke.

Load the flat-ferrule brush (as described in the February issue) with half HENNA and half DARK GREEN. Be sure the brush is wet enough to allow the colors to blend properly and re-

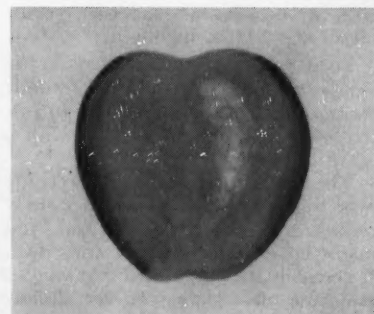


member that the darker color should go to the outside of the motif. Also, the pressure on the stroke should always be on the side of the brush that has the darker color.

In one sweeping stroke following the curve of the apple, put in your shadow; then refill the brush and repeat the procedure on the other side.

These shadows should not be labored over; instead, each should be completed in one stroke as recommended. It is important, therefore, that you have the thickness of application just right so that the color and the blending will be right after glazing and firing.

3. Using the sable quill, rather moist, take either CHARTREUSE or YELLOW *translucent* and flow in a highlight slightly off center to one side



of the apple. Here again judging the correct amount of color and degree of (Please turn to Page 34)



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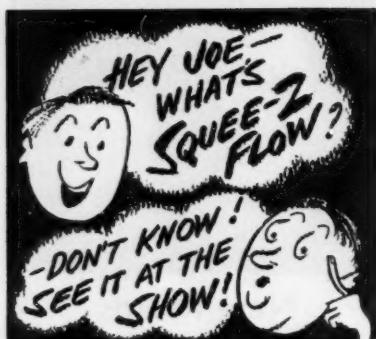
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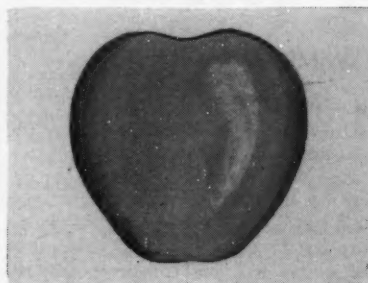
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Underglaze Series

(Begins on Page 33)

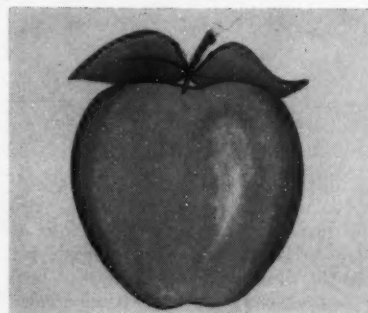
wetness will come from experience.

4. Outline the apple with the liner,



using one continuous stroke on each side (see March).

5. If you wish to add some leaves, the following colors are suggested: for the leaves proper, CHARTREUSE or JADE GREEN; the shadows, DARK GREEN



and/or HENNA; the highlights, BURNT ORANGE and/or CHARTREUSE. The leaves should be set off also by outlining.

When you feel you have mastered the technique, glaze one of the pieces and fire. An inspection of the decoration after firing will tell you quickly whether you have become adept at blending and judging the amount of color needed.

Try other motifs. Here are two sets of recommended colors:

Pear — *opaque* JONQUIL-YELLOW background; BURNT-ORANGE and/or HENNA *translucent* shadow; *translucent* ROSE-PINK highlight.

Purple grapes—*opaque* ALICE-BLUE, PALE-ROSE, or ORCHID background; *translucent* GRAPE and/or BLACK shadow; the highlight is cut in with a sgraffito tool.

The colors I mention are merely my own suggestions. Other teachers may recommend other colors, and you might have better ideas of your own. It certainly isn't suggested that you set aside the underglazes you are already using and use only those recommended. And, as I suggested in the very first article (January), try a variety of brands and colors. ●

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Ceram Activities

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MEET OUR AUTHORS:

■ **Marguerite Montgomery** (see page 18) is a descendent of the original Pennsylvania Germans. She lives on the outskirts of Philadelphia, in an old stone house built by Welsh-Quakers in 1803. In this tradition-steeped setting, she seeks to capture in her own ceramics the flavor of the early Pennsylvania-Dutch ware. Monty, as she is known, took the crafts of her forebears for granted until some of her architect-husband's enthusiasm for their architecture brushed off on her. A product of the Pennsylvania Museum's



School of Industrial Art, Monty has taught ceramics for adult-education groups and Girl Scout troops. She participates actively in the Philadelphia Chapter of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen; gives talks on the history and crafts of the area. Her family, she says, is confronted daily with her special interest: their meals are served on plates of her own making which bear such admonishing inscriptions as "Don't go to seed until you're ready to be planted" and "It's better to wear out than to rust out."



■ Yes, **Bill Wilbanks** is definitely a chess player (read about his ceramic chess set, page 22) though he rates himself strictly as an amateur. As a professional ceramist, he has sold three of his chess sets to date and is planning others to be made in the near

future. The only unique thing about him, he claims, is that he's a practicing potter; that is, he makes his living entirely by making and selling pots. "I do not teach or have other outside income (although I have taught part time quite a bit in the past). All my pots are wheel-thrown and I sell all I can make. I do

not have to compromise on design or quality. When a craftsman says he can't make a living at his craft in this day and age, I say he hasn't tried. I find the market for good craft items insatiable and growing rapidly."

Wilbanks had a retail shop of his own for three years, but now sells wholesale to West Coast shops from Los Angeles to Seattle. He's twenty-eight, married, father of four children and proud owner of a dachshund. He lives in Portland.

■ A man who cannot be satisfied with leaving well enough alone is **Reinhold Pieper Marxhausen**. In his ingenious hands, toy balloons (page 14) become drape molds; electric light bulbs serve a similar purpose (CM, September); discarded kiln cones turn up as jewelry (CM, February). Nothing is safe from his invention.



Creativity in all things rather than in confined areas such as painting pictures or modeling clay alone is a way of life with Marxhausen. An art teacher at Concordia Teachers College (Seward, Nebr.), he encourages his students to explore and experiment: see what you can make of sundry materials but keep it simple is his keynote.

Always practicing what he preaches, Marxhausen invents educational toys for children, makes his own furniture and countless household objects, these last from whatever sets off his imagination (chicken wire, for example, was one of the ingredients of a lamp). He plays the cello—and we wouldn't be surprised to hear that this too has been pressed into service to perform some function other than that for which it was intended!

■ And the **Regulars**: **Jo Rebert** (p. 16), enamelist and painter who now lives in Los Angeles and has been writing on jewelry and accessories in CM since June 1955 (see **CERAM-ACTIVITIES** of that date and Dec. for more details); **Tom Sellers** (p. 22), professional potter who directs the city's Arts and Crafts Center at Columbus, O., and started his throwing series in CM in Sept. 1954 (see Mar. C/A column); **Bea Matney** (p. 24), California-trained decorator-ceramist now living in Ohio whose specialty is flowers and underglazes (for details, see Feb. 1955).

HOBBY SHOW TIME: Again, it's the season of the spring shows where manufacturers and dealers display the newest as well as the tried and true in ceramic equipment and (Please turn to Page 36)

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Ceram-Activities

(Begins on Page 35)

supplies. These shows, held in various large
cities, are organized for the benefit of hob-
byists and teachers. At them, an enormous
range of items—from molds and ready-made
glazes to kilns and wheels—may be seen.
Demonstrations are continually in process;
and representatives of the companies are on
hand to give information and advice. Com-
petitive exhibits, with prizes, highlight the
shows. See "Itinerary" (p. 10) for dates
and places. Plan to attend; and, at Detroit
and Asbury Park, visit CM's booth!

HEINO TO CHOUINARD: Well-known potter
Vivika Heino has become head of the ceram-
ics department at Chouinard Art Institute, Los
Angeles. The school now offers a four-year
course leading to a B.F.A. degree in ceramics.
Mrs. Heino was formerly of New Hampshire
but for the last three years has been teaching
ceramics at USC.

WANTED: Information about Ceramic-ing
Vacation Spots. Some people—school
teachers, hobbyists and others—want to
work at potting or enameling during their
time off from regular jobs. Where, they
ask, can we go? If you, Dear Readers,
will let CM know immediately of camps,
schools, workshops specializing in summer
ceramics, we can list them in these
columns (see March issue for two list-
ings). They can be large or small; in big
cities or in out-of-the-way spots. Who
knows—you may be helping a fellow cer-
amist to the best "vacation" he ever had!

Anyone for Chess?

(Begins on Page 22)

fifty-four inches long and thirty-four
inches wide, the tile playing surface is
thirty-two inches square. I used
Miracle adhesive for setting the tiles,
the buttering type where a liberal am-
ount is applied to the back of each
tile before it is placed; no grouting
was necessary because the tiles were
set flush with no mortar joint.

Now, it's your move. ●

Black Matt—Cone 5

	parts
Potash Feldspar	53
Flint	18.5
Ball Clay	4.5
China Clay	4.5
Zinc Oxide	6.5
Barium Carbonate	13
Black Copper Oxide	4
Manganese Dioxide	4

White Gloss—Cone 5

	parts
Nepheline Syenite	93
Colemanite	34
White Lead	45
Talc	35
Flint	90
Ball Clay	10
Zircopax	30
Red Iron Oxide	1.7

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Enameling: Multi-Piece Jewelry

(Begins on Page 16)

it. If there is too much water, making it difficult to pick up the enamel with a tiny spatula, the excess moisture can be absorbed with a piece of blotter.)

These colors are laid in one at a time; and where several pieces call for areas of the same color, all are completed before the next color is introduced so that the tools won't have to be cleaned so often.

7. In the wet inlay process, the edge of each color is straightened and made neat before the next color is pushed up against it. If the edge of the color area is curved, a bit of blotter cut with a rounded end, is an aid in this cleaning-up operation. The small individual pieces tend to slide around as you work but this can be prevented by holding any convenient tool against the edge.

8. The joining line between any two colors is packed down level, with the leveling tool held at a right angle to the line. A proper amount of moisture in the enamels is essential to neat leveling. If too much water is present, one color will float into another or be carried over by the tool. A miniature blotter can be used to help control moisture.

When the wet inlay is completed, all the edges of the pieces are wiped clean and the drilled holes again

freed of enamel.

9. Now the pieces are placed on stilts and fired. Then all edges are stoned on the top side with fine Carborundum, the stone pulled in a downward motion away from the enameled surface to avoid chipping. The process is repeated for the counterenamel edges, and the bare spots for findings are also stoned. A washing with detergent follows, and then the findings are soldered (or cemented) in place.

Now the edges are given a final polishing with fine steel wool—because an enameled piece should feel perfectly smooth as well as look that way! The last step consists of joining the various parts of each earring together with jump rings.

A closing word about the findings for jewelry. Usually those least conspicuous in color are most appropriate, unless the findings are deliberately used as accent. Silver findings, for example, go well with a piece which has blue, green or gray enamel, or silver foil, as the dominating color. Gold or brass findings might be used with red, orange and yellow colors as well as with gold foil; on the other hand, copper findings look well with copper luster and in cases where bare copper is exposed as in *champlevé*. ●

Flowers: the Pansy

(Begins on Page 24)

ing and cutting is, of course, repeated for each color.)

A pattern isn't needed for the pansy. Use a leaf cutter for the leaves; circles for the petals (Mrs. Matney's are slightly under 1/2-inch in diameter); and, for this arrangement, a triangle for the base.

2. The leaves are thinned at the edges, shaped and the veins scratched in with a sharp tool. One leaf is set at each corner of the triangle; a dab of thick slip makes sure it stays in place.

The base is always made first so that each of the subsequent pieces can be set in place immediately after forming with minimum handling.

3. Now for the flower. Each of the five tiny circles of clay is thinned toward the edges, leaving a thicker part at one end, which will be attached to the base. The outside edge is gently ruffled. Two such pieces are overlapped and set together on the base.

4. Two additional petals, made exactly the same way, are then placed directly opposite each other, cover-

ing the bottom of the under petals.

The last petal is thinned all around; that is, no thick section is left. This is gently folded over the slipper end of a lace tool to form a triangular shape. This is the center of the pansy and is placed in the lower portion of the arrangement to complete the circle. Of course, thick slip was used to hold each of the petals in place.

5. The completed flower is speared on the end of a pointed tool and immediately set in place. When all of the elements for the pin and the earrings have been completed and thoroughly dried, they are bisque fired. No attempt should be made to decorate the unfired pieces because they are extremely fragile.

6. After the bisque firing, the decorations are applied. Since the flowers and leaves were made of colored clay, no overall coloring is needed here. The faces of the pansies are brushed in with underglazes, the leaves veined in a darker green (if you like), clear glaze applied overall and then the final firing.

At the top of page 24 you see the finished jewelry, out of the kiln and ready for findings to be attached. ●

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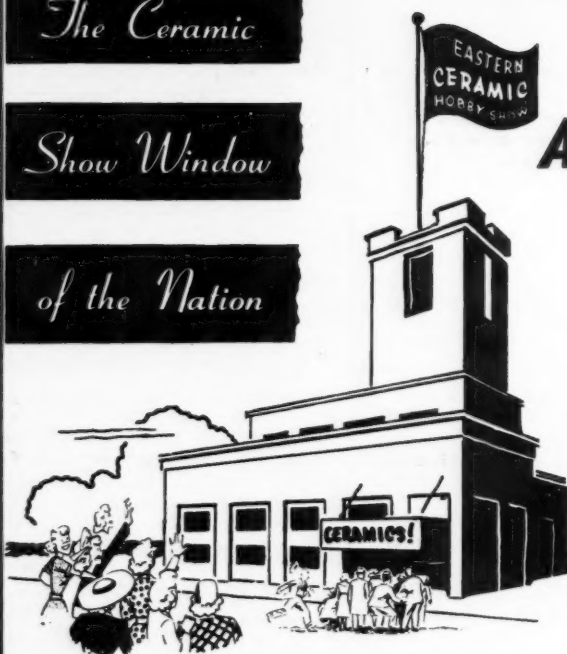
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